

Rules For the Masters In Education Reimbursement Program

Adopted March 30, 2000

WAC 250-81-010

Purpose.

This program is intended to partially reimburse teachers or teacher candidates for educational expenses they incur when they receive a master's degree in education or a master's degree in teaching and return to teaching in a public school classroom.

WAC 250-81-020

Definitions.

- (1) "Board" means the higher education coordinating board.
- (2) "OSPI" means the office of the superintendent of public instruction.
- (3) "Public school" means an elementary school, a middle school, junior high school, or high school within the public school system referred to in Article IX of the state Constitution.
- (4) "Eligible applicant" means a person who:
 - (a) Did not possess a master's degree in any subject prior to July 1, 1999;
 - (b) Receives either a master's in education or a master's in teaching degree from an institution of higher education in Washington after June 30, 1999; and
 - (c) Is teaching in one of the state's public elementary, middle, or secondary schools or has a contract to teach in one of those schools for the next academic year at a rate of half-time or greater.
- (5) "Master's degree" means a master's in education or a master's in teaching degree.
- (6) "Institution of higher education" means an accredited public or private college or university offering graduate degree coursework in the state of Washington including the branch campuses of out-of-state institutions which have a physical classroom presence within the state of Washington.
- (7) "Accredited" means an institution certified by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges or by a similar regional accrediting body.
- (8) "Teaching credential" means a teaching endorsement conferred by the office of the superintendent of public instruction or documentation that shows completion of a major or minor in one or more specific priority areas.
- (9) "Mathematics or science" means an endorsement or major or minor in mathematics or science, biology, chemistry, earth science, or physics, as determined by the OSPI.
- (10) "Priority areas" means those curriculum or teaching specialties defined as priorities in the selection of recipients for reimbursement.
- (11) "Documentation" means evidence supporting the applicant's:
 - (a) Current teaching service;
 - (b) Possession of a teaching credential in priority area; and
 - (c) Receipt of an appropriate master's degree from an accredited institution of higher education.
- (12) "Educational expenses" means the current representative average annual tuition and fees for resident graduate students attending the state's research institutions, as determined by the board.

WAC 250-81-030

Application procedure.

- (1) The completed application will include all necessary documentation.
- (2) The board will treat all applications in a confidential manner.
- (3) Applications will be made available through several means including:
 - (a) Mailings to institutions of higher education;
 - (b) Mailings to related teacher and school organizations;
 - (c) Posting on the HECB website at <http://www.hecb.wa.gov>;
 - (d) Direct mailing to individuals.
- (4) The board will annually set a deadline for the receipt of applications and documentation for reimbursement from that year's funds.

WAC 250-81-040

Recipient selection and ranking in priority order.

- (1) First priority will be given to applicants who possess a mathematics or science teaching credential.
- (2) The board may set other priorities if needed to properly expend program funding.
- (3) Applicants who do not receive the reimbursement may reapply in the second year.

WAC 250-81-050

Reimbursement amount.

- (1) Within available funds and until these funds are exhausted, the board may repay all or a portion of the educational expenses incurred by a teacher, or teacher candidate, for one year of master's level studies at an accredited Washington institution of higher education.
- (2) The annual maximum reimbursement shall be set by the board. Depending upon the number of eligible applicants, the reimbursement may be prorated among eligible applicants at a rate less than the maximum.
- (3) Funds are to be prorated among all eligible first priority applicants, not to exceed the annual maximum as set by the board.
- (4) If funds remain after awards have been made to first priority applicants, the board may establish a second priority group to fully expend program funding. The award to this population of applicants shall not exceed the amount received by the first priority applicants.
- (5) If funds continue to remain after reimbursing the second priority applicants, then the remaining funds shall be prorated among all remaining eligible applicants, not to exceed the award given to the first priority group.
- (6) The reimbursement for any individual eligible applicant shall be reduced by the sum of all other tuition reimbursements received by the applicant from other public sources. Other public sources include the applicant's school and school district, but do not include student loans or student aid awarded through a college or university.

WAC 250-81-060

Program administration.

(1) The board shall administer the program. The board shall be responsible for:

- (a) Collection of applications and documentation;
- (b) Determination of eligibility;
- (c) Determination of the eligibility of institutions of higher education within Washington;
- (d) Adjudication of all appeals;
- (e) Disbursement of awards; and
- (f) Maintenance of records.

(2) The board shall request from the OSPI:

- (a) A list of all public elementary, middle, junior high, and high schools within Washington; and
- (b) The list of teaching credentials which qualify as mathematics or science.